

Message Text

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PAGE 01 NAIROB 02407 220605Z

20

ACTION AF-06

INFO OCT-01 EUR-12 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-03 H-02

INR-07 L-02 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15

USIA-06 CU-02 AID-05 NIC-01 /071 W

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R 211445Z MAR 75

FM AMEMBASSY NAIROBI

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 2015

INFO AMEMBASSY ADDIS ABABA

AMEMBASSY DAR ES SALAAM

AMEMBASSY LONDON

AMEMBASSY MOGADISCIO

C O N F I D E N T I A L NAIROBI 2407

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PINS, PINT, ASEC, KE

SUBJECT: KENYATTA STAGES MILITARY DEMONSTRATION

REF: NAIROBI 2222

1. PRESIDENT KENYATTA ON MARCH 21 SUMMONED PARLIAMENT TO STATE HOUSE NAIROBI FOR A MILITARY MARCH-PAST/FLY-PAST CLEARLY INTENDED TO DEMONSTRATE THAT HE HAS THE ARMED FORCES AND POLICE SOLIDLY BEHIND HIM. AFTER FLYING OVER STATE HOUSE, KENYA AIR FORCE JETS STARTLED NAIROBI DURING NOON RUSH HOUR WITH AN UNPRECEDENTED SERIES OF SCREAMING LOW-LEVEL PASSES OVER CITY ITSELF. TROOPS WERE THEN MARCHED FROM STATE HOUSE THROUGH CITY, WHERE THEY WERE AGAIN REVIEWED BY KENYATTA AND SMALL ENTOURAGE THAT INCLUDED MINISTER OF STATE KOINANGE AND CHIEFS OF ARMED SERVICES. AFTER REVIEWING TROOPS FROM CURB-SIDE, PRESIDENT WALKED TO WAITING CAR, GIVING CUSTOMARY WAVE TO ESTIMATED 2,000-3,000 ONLOOKERS. INSTEAD OF USUAL WARM APPLAUSE, HIS GESTURE MET WITH TOTAL SILENCE.

2. PRESIDENT OBVIOUSLY INTENDED HIS FIRST PUBLIC APPEARANCE SINCE MARCH 2 DISAPPEARANCE OF J.M. KARIUKI TO DEMONSTRATE
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PAGE 02 NAIROB 02407 220605Z

THAT HE CLEARLY IN CHARGE, BUT SILENT RECEPTION SUGGESTS

THIS EFFORT MAY HAVE BEEN LESS THAN SUCCESSFUL AND WAS ALSO REVEALING OF PRESENT DEGREE OF POPULAR FEELING AGAINST HIM.

3. MEANWHILE, CLOSED-DOOR PARLIAMENTARY INVESTIGATION INTO KARIUKI'S MURDER IS CONTINUING, SO FAR WITHOUT ANY PUBLIC DISCLOSURE. IT PRESENTLY UNCLEAR WHETHER INVESTIGATIVE COMMITTEE WILL CONTINUE INQUIRY DURING MONTH-LONG EASTER RECESS DUE TO BEGIN END OF NEXT WEEK. (UNIVERSITY, WHICH WAS SCENE OF ONLY ANTI-GOK DEMONSTRATIONS, BEGAN ITS TEN DAY EASTER VACATION TODAY.) THERE ARE RUMORS THAT MP'S CONSIDERING CALLING FOR CREATION OF POSITION OF PRIME MINISTER AS WAY OF EASING KENYATTA FROM DIRECT INVOLVEMENT IN GOVT. RECENT REMARKS OF TWO SENIOR CIVIL SERVANTS TO AMBASSADOR AND DCM TO EFFECT THAT QTE POLITICIANS ARE GOING TO WORK THINGS OUT UNQTE SUGGEST THAT RUMORS MAY HAVE SOME SUBSTANCE.

4. APART FROM TODAY'S MARCH-PAST/FLY-PAST, HOWEVER, MANEUVERINGS HAVE NOT AFFECTED BUSINESS-AS-USUAL ATMOSPHERE OF NAIROBI. POLICE HAVE NOT BEEN NOTABLY EVIDENT AND NO SPECIAL SECURITY PRECAUTIONS APPARENT AT GOVERNMENT BUILDINGS, INCLUDING MINISTRY OF DEFENSE.
MARSHALL

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